

# **Development Process of an Experience Concept - Project Vintage Hunt System**

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<p>This thesis is implemented as a project oriented process between September 2014 and March 2015. The main idea was to publish a booklet that would assist on advancing the visibility of the growing selection of vintage and second-hand clothing and accessory stores in Helsinki, Finland, while promoting the scene for locals and visitors. But while the project continued and more finalized ideas were generated and compared, the booklet was transformed into a concept serving the same mean, but operating internet based and communicative with the customers.</p> <p>The theory collection was gathered to support the predictions that existed about development process, methods and managing different project stages. The factual information relates to creating a completely new concept, methods and phases of strategy formation, marketing channels, experience creation and use of storytelling in service businesses connected with social behavior in individualistic culture. Global, style related groups are discussed as a contribution on customers' personal image formation.</p> <p>In the project share of the thesis the theory learnings are connected for development process' favor. Growing creativity confidence, combining and testing existing ideas were actualized with the methods of workshop, visual thinking, brain- and bodystorming. Business Model Canvas strategy tool was the key asset when the concept was critically evaluated and redefined.</p> <p>Critical discussion over the concepts strategy and suitable delivery channels brought the focus back to usability, fun and informative value of the thesis result. After a decision to postpone the original time frame, the concept was adapted so that its main channel is an online platform for community called Vintage Hunt System. VHS (professional team, shop owners and customers) will collect and publish company customers shop related business stories and pictures; share tips about topic phenomenon and events; and involve customers to content creation by using their pictures, reviews and writings. At the appendices mind-maps, pictures, graphics and mood board are to show the used methods mentality and outcome of the project.</p> <p>To conclude, collecting an enough detailed and appropriate theory base was experienced difficult and worried to disturb the whole. Opening the topic for discussion with outsiders had considerable positive effect on how customer expectations and involvement was taken into account during the creation process. Thought the projects limitation and timetabling changed, instead of creating conflict for the thesis, it solved many practicalities and clarified the whole marketing strategy and maintaining processes. The author closes the work with great desire to implement the concept in the future after involving suitable partners and sponsors.</p>	
<b>Keywords</b> concept development, marketing, customer involvement, co-creation, project	

## Table of Content

1	Introduction .....	1
1.1	The goal of the thesis and delimitation .....	1
1.2	Project: Vintage Hunt System .....	2
2	Development Process of a New Service.....	4
2.1	Innovation and service designing .....	4
2.2	Formulating the Strategy .....	7
2.2.1	Business Model Canvas.....	8
2.3	Marketing.....	11
2.3.1	E-marketing.....	12
2.3.2	Managing social business marketing.....	13
2.4	Social, global and local factors on customer involvement.....	15
3	Experience chronicles and their importance to business .....	17
3.1	Experience.....	17
3.2	Stories taking on businesses.....	19
4	Conclusion .....	21
5	Project: Vintage Hunt System.....	22
5.1	Idea.....	22
5.2	Topic proposal .....	24
5.3	Critical redefining .....	25
5.4	Concept and Plan of Actions: Vintage Hunt System .....	26
5.4.1	Channels of customer engagement and value delivery .....	27
5.4.2	Key Resources and Key Activities .....	29
5.4.3	Other Beneficial Partnerships.....	30
5.5	Results.....	31
6	Discussion.....	32
	References .....	36
	Appendices.....	39
	Appendix 1. Topic Proposal Poster: Vintage Hunt .....	39
	Appendix 2. Creation Process Material .....	40
	Appendix 3. Selected 10 Shops and their differentiation.....	41
	Appendix 4. Business Model Canvas: Vintage Hunt System .....	42
	Appendix 5. Logo, Sticker .....	43
	Appendix 6. Layout for the Front page .....	44
	Appendix 7. Mood board for the Treasure Map and Booklet.....	45
	Appendix 8. Mood board for the Treasure Map and Booklet.....	46

# 1 Introduction

The idea for this project oriented thesis started when the graduate wanted to generate discussion and interest to advance the possibilities for locals and visitors to find the growing variety of vintage and second hand clothing stores in Helsinki, Finland. A long lasted enthusiasm towards this specific scene of old and unique clothing and accessories had brought many friends and acquaintances to ask for guidance around the city and interesting, unfamiliar shop. While studying tourism and experience more particularly, combination of those two to create something useful yet fun, started to develop, ending to this thesis, which includes two parts. The theory section explains the procedures enabling the concept creation. And the project part presents planning, actions and future plans of the concept and appendices visualize the outcome of this all.

## 1.1 The goal of the thesis and delimitation

This thesis is project oriented, justified with focus to practical methods and actions aiming to conclude as a product, tangible or some prove of what has been achieved during the process. At first the limitation adapted to an idea to collect and publish a product, treasure map, during the coming spring. This was changed while development phase when discovering options and coming to understanding the possibilities this first version would have if improved by altering the offering also to other medias.

The major target for the theoretical thesis ground work was to gather together primal knowledge about service design development, understandable methods and strategy elements to deliver fluency to the process which would result in generating a distinguishable concept to serve a specific customer segment. By taking into account the found theory concerning the topic as well as observed behavior, can be assumed that online channels, their usability for marketing alike to social communication is booming. Businesses rapidity of reacting and functions in the middle of these renewing channels and even faster changing trends create great potential as well as competition.

The second chapter of theory basis gathers main knowledge of composing customer experience and advanced understanding of professional, well applied storytelling together. These emphasis had great positive influence on the project, as its aim reformed to creation of experiential, activating and informative combination of services and products. Later the references are also to concept or system, reflecting strongly the prevailing readiness of the process, which followed slightly unusual product life cycle as idea generation, testing and bettering happen continuously. These dissimilarities to the expected sequence of

events are understandable when taking to consideration that by the time of the thesis is becoming complete the planned project team does not yet exist. Another major reason for contrast is that this project aims to provide new marketing asset for others instead of taking triumphant advantage for itself. The anticipation is non the less than to bring about a concept that benefits both the observed customer segment and the business customers, and that doable plans for follow-up and that way needed transformations could be modeled and carried out.

## **1.2 Project: Vintage Hunt System**

In the second half of the thesis, at project section, the product development process is presented in chronological order to describe truthfully the actions and consequences that followed. The project made practice of the collected theory ground work and best purposely useful methods of it. The projects current situation, expectations and necessary actions to eventually start implementing the project during the future months is also presented.

During the autumn 2014 in thesis seminar, the project started as graduate started to gather material for the thesis topic proposal at seminars poster day. Coming up with an idea and taking a hold on it, turned out to be the starting point for the whole project. Better qualified information of the field and support for the claim that anticipated customer group exists were intentionally sought after. The object of the proposal was to develop a simple nonetheless appealing service product to help locals and visitors to find the growing number of vintage and second-hand clothing stores in Helsinki.

Putting the idea straight and finding best possible doings was started by learning and internalizing Kelley & Kelley's (2013) theory of creative confidence. After which the produced notions were modified with the help of Business Model Canvas by Osterwalder and Pigneur (2010). After information gathering, weighing the order of precedence by planning and writing the theoretical share of the thesis brought the focus back to strategy development and time limitations. This lead to making decisions and forming more detailed and concrete concept.

The concept and plan of actions it will require is presented at the last chapter, which is divided to subchapters to present results controlled. When proceeding with the project strategy formation the main actions condensed to the following. First start raising awareness, interest and communication with the owners. Then gather a professionally competent team to create internet based platform to collect and share information and stories of

the selected vintage and second hand stores. After which generate activity amongst the customer segment to engage them on content co-creation by using social media, which adds value to the experience even after the actual service situation.

At the appendices mind-maps, pictures, graphics and mood board are to show the methods mentality and outcome of the project.

## **2 Development Process of a New Service**

The orientation of this chapter is on the theoretical knowledge concerning the development process of a new product or service. In principle the topics will present the factual information connected to creating of a completely new concept. These are the four core themes specified in chronological order. Starting from the basis of this proceeding, innovation and service design generation as well as supporting methods to continuing progress and renewal are been introduced. Second subject is the formulation and selecting most suitable tactics to business strategy with the assistance of Business Model Canvas, tool for business strategy formation and concretization. Then marketing, e-marketing and challenging social business are to be deepen because of their importance to the thesis project and its key channels. This chapter is to finish with relevant aspects of social and communicative culture concerning consumer behavior in scale of understanding the local and global similarities and differences.

“The essential components of the plan are understanding customers, creating an offering that delivers value, communicating the value to the customer, exchanging with the customer, and evaluating the firm’s performance.” (Raymond, M.A. & Tanner, J.F. 2015, chapter 1.4.)

### **2.1 Innovation and service designing**

“Innovation means a new kind of product, service, process, approach or similar, which benefits financially or otherwise“, according to Ojasalo, Moilanen & Ritalahti (2014, 38-39.) Service design has similar structures to innovation production, but is more often connected strongly with experiential and user-centered approach meaning to develop business’ internal actions, or to better the usability and distinguishability of existing services, aiming to optimize the experience of given service. Whereas with an innovation it’s highly important not to let the new invention to drop, but to implement and commercialize it after improvements and testing process, to provide financial profit. (Ojasalo et al. 2014, 71, 38-39.)

Developing new products and managing them through constantly changing market with growing competition is vital for all businesses, both start-ups and ones with more history and produced goods. Most products follow a life cycle (Figure 1). They “come into being, grow, mature, age, and eventually decline away” (Sisney, L. 2014.) out of the way of newer products answering superior to the customer needs and market situation. This explains major challenge of businesses, when they must necessarily have an ongoing innovation process to generate new products to replace ones losing their charm. (Bowen, Kotler & Makens 2010, 244.)

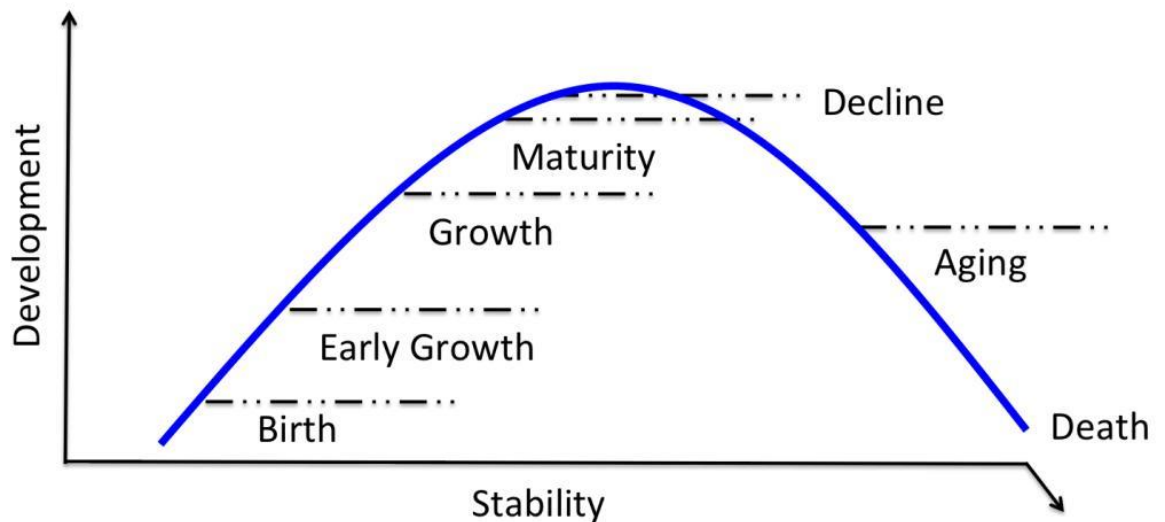


Figure 1. Demonstration of the usual lifecycle of a product. Development and stability showed as correlations. (Sisney, L. 2014.)

When talking about service design, the compulsory modifications are possible to smuggle into the already existing service palette without running down the whole. And by this continuous readiness for improvements and phase of renewal, services life cycle may start over by deleting the unfitting parts and staying with the applicable elements.

Systematic search is a key element when looking for new ideas. Commonly the style is to advance from afar and try to avoid criticism. Target is to generate multiple solution proposals for the problem in focus, after which assess their compatibilities with company's business type and viability. (Bowen et al, 2010, 245; Tuulaniemi, J., 2011, 180.) New service needs can be found from various sources such as these ones. *External environment*: Being familiar with what's happening outside of company walls is necessary when being a part of such vast reforming world of needs and wants. Especially the hospitality industry is dependent on the external environment. (Bowen et al, 2010, 245.) *Internal sources*: Management and employees might notice a problem or possible success factor which shows a need of new service. (Jaakkola, E., Orava, M. & Varjonen, V. 2009, 12.) *Customers*: Involving customer to the process is applicable part of the by any means successful development function. (Ojasalo et al. 2014, 72.) Systematic customer satisfaction collection and such way open communication provides a channel for encouraging and urging messages, likewise problems and dissatisfaction to show themselves, which generates new solutions. Solution for one might serve as service for many. (Jaakkola et al, 2009, 8-9.) *Competitors*: Analyzing competitors and their products, picking up ideas from other markets and copying international entrepreneurs to transform the idea to benefit own means has created many successful businesses. (Bowen et al, 2010, 247.) *Associates*: New service designs



can be invented through cooperation by combining parties' diversity of abilities and knowledge. (Jaakkola et al, 2009, 9.)

In addition to these, a flourishing way to stay tuned for upcoming *trend signals* is staying active on the field related sphere by means of visiting fairs and seminars, reading and publishing in magazines and networks, and following what's happening in educational and marketing field regarding company's industry. (Bowen et al, 2010, 245-248.) In imagination demanding development process *collaborative brainstorming* methods are used to grow the willingness and boldness to provide new views and solutions through sharing and openness. (Ojasalo et al, 2014, 158.) *Bodystorming* is one method that can be modified to fit situation, group and location. The unifying factor of bodystorming is the use of physical action and experiencing the surroundings actively, to enliven and encourage the brainstorming. This method that encourages developers to change their working environment, recording tools and manner of presenting and explaining ideas, aims to challenge designers and this way to foster their creativity. (Ojasalo et al, 2014, 170.)

In service design, after generating plenty of production ideas, they are compared in idea screening to distinguish the most suitable ones for projects' purposes. This happens usually in rapid mode by emphasized modeling and assessment. The service idea is concretized e.g. visualizing it through building prototypes, drawing imaginative service customer paths and simulating the possible customer touch-points with acting. By screening ideas quickly, it's possible to aim the work, time and other assets to one more applicable, if the handled idea is found dysfunctional and undesirable. (Ojasalo et al, 2014, 76.)

According to Jaakkola et al. (2009, 9-10) critical evaluation and attempt to assess future situation is to focus on next main causes. *Strategic suitability* is thought-out to reveal does it harm or provide advantage for company's current services? What resources it applies? Will it fulfill company's mission? (Bowen et al, 2010, 248.) *Market situation* is influential for the potential customer share and segment. What are major competitors and benefits compared to them? *Viability* results of the costs and efficiency of the service. What ensures a balance between costs and returns? And *requirements of development* phase itemizes resources needed to organize, plan and develop the service. Does company have suitable associates for the process? (Jaakkola et al, 2009, 9-10.)

Conceptualization and placing the service into practice is a final part of service designing process. (Ojasalo et al. 2014, 76.) Service concept is used to combine scattered ideas to one complete whole. This can be used as a map: it helps identifying the core, thought leaving room for changes when proceeded to details of the service. (Tuulaniemi, 2011,

189.) When the service concept is defined, evaluating and envisioning company's situation on the market and strategy planning will be practicable. "A clear product concept greatly assists with branding, trade, and positioning." (Bowen et al, 2010, 250.)

## **2.2 Formulating the Strategy**

*SWOT analysis* is a tool to sort out the current state on the company, by describing the organizations and its actions inner strength and weaknesses, external possibilities and threats. (Ojasalo et al. 2014, 147.) According to Raymond, M.A. & Tanner, J.F. (2015) internal matters are somewhat controllable. Strengths could take in the brand name and resources, good reputation of service and efficiency, while weakness can be revealed as lack of talented employees, low awareness of product situation in the market or poor location. External factors then change regardless on the internal actions, yet outer events effect the internal actions, by forming the business environment where company operates. Possible opportunities entail favorable trends growing demand and market with few competitors. Bad economy, many competitors, growing production costs and downward trends show are threats to be taken into consideration. With information collected from the analysis, company's' objectives, mission statement, value proposition and strategies can be developed more feasible. (Raymond et al. 2015, 2.3.)

Objectives describe desired accomplishments within certain time frame. When objectives are achievable and measurable, they give manager resort to evaluate marketing action success, and for employees help and motivation, when knowing better what they are working towards. (Raymond et al. 2015, 2.4.) Mission statements are often publicized, because it states, in a branded nutshell, the purpose and reason of the company existence. (Raymond et al. 2015, 2.3.) And a vision is together planned and shared view of how the company could ideally become. (Ojasalo et al. 2014, 148.)

Implementation of strategy means the actions firm is going to take to meet the set objectives. In many businesses marketing is the section that transforms strategies into something more visible, and if successful; helps in establishment phase and maintaining competitive advantage. (Raymond et al. 2015, 2.4.) These strategic key components sorted out in the next chapter, *Business Model Canvas*, are being used when planning and implementing marketing strategy.

Marketing strategy is ideally a comprehensive summary on how to achieve the objectives set and exploit distinctive competitive advantage. Chaffey, D. & Smith, PR. (2013) unbind the importance of planning multiform marketing as a decision on whether offline and

online marketing are different or integrated, which helps to fit all related activities together. Deciding communication points, manners of website development and separating the long and shorter term plans from each other becomes less complex. Choosing a tactic suitable to company's mission and resources would be the best option, but if company lacks the knowledge of proper knowledge, they lean on tactics, clump them together and call it a strategy. Instead of attempting to succeed by chance it's suggested to focus on company's strategic components and develop a controlled marketing strategy. (Chaffey et al. 2013, 553.)

Before creating a strategy plan, business must create a *value proposition* that sates the specific benefits it offers for a buyer. Value proposition focuses on customers' side of the deal, and points out the differentiating, superior advantages customer receives compared to the competitors. (Raymond et al. 2015, chapter 2.1.)

Strategy planning is used to help organization to center their resources appropriately throughout the company levels; management to functional levels. (Raymond et al. 2015, 2.2.) When planning strategy, the service, brand and position on the markets competition situation, are to be assessed, refined even further and envisioned. (Tuulaniemi, 2011, 172.)

### **2.2.1 Business Model Canvas**

Alexander Osterwalder and Yves Pigneur (2010) wanted to create a concept for business modeling that would be enough simple, relevant and understandable to be used in workshops for business model innovation and good discussions; where the talk would start from same point and focus on same things, to help analyzing the existing procedures and generating new ideas. (Osterwalder, A. & Pigneur, Y., 2010, 15; Ojasalo et al, 2014, 182.)

Business Model Canvas (BMC) (Figure 1, Appendix 4.) is "a hands-on tool that fosters understanding, discussion, creativity and analysis." (Osterwalder et al, 2010, 42.) It can be used enlarged for joint creative work to develop variable implements or copied for several alternative versions of project in process. In the development process innovative thinking benefits from putting aside the common approach and typical solutions of the industry. BMCs' main benefits are its user-friendliness and comprehensiveness. As fulfilled it portrays and rationalizes how the company yields and delivers value for customers (Ojasalo s.184.) The four key areas of any business; "customers, offer, infrastructure and financial viability" (Osterwalder et al, 2010, 15.) are covered in the canvas with these nine building blocks:

*Customer Segments* describe and explain which groups of people the company aims to reach and provide services to. When company makes conscious decision on segmentation, shaping common understanding of customer needs is more possible, and the business model can be built around specific customer needs when it is more likely to function. Finding profitable customers enables company survival on longer term. Niche market targeting cater to specific customer expectations, with more tailoring on value propositions, channels of distribution and customer relationships. (Osterwalder et al, 2010, 20-21.)

*Value Proposition* is an aggregation of the benefits company offers to its customers, and this way answer to question: why customer turns to our company instead of the other ones? One element of service may create value or it can be a distinct mix of many, either quantitative (price, time) or qualitative (semblance, manner of customer service) or both. The element can be modified with several ways; by renewing; customizing; lowering the price, costs or risks; completing the offer exceeding expectations of quality or speed; or improving the service to performance. (Osterwalder et al, 2010, 22-25.)

*Channels* block describes how value propositions are delivered to the customer throughout his experience with the company. Channels are touch points between parties; company can raise awareness of their supply, deliver value through and offer support also after the purchase event, whereas customer can evaluate value propositions accuracy and make purchases using these channels. Weighting channels cost-efficiency and integration is smart when surrounded with numerous alternatives. (Osterwalder et al, 2010, 26-27.)

*Customer Relationships* can range depending on whether company wants to establish more personal or more distant relation with each customer segment. Customer acquisition, retention and effort to upsell can be motivational factors when forming certain type of customer relationships. Personal assistance is based on interaction where customer can communicate with personnel that helps during and after the sales process. Co-creation means relationship where company invites customers to co-create value and new services together, and possible even provides the setting for these actions e.g. chat rooms, extranets and workshops. (Osterwalder et al, 2010, 28-29.)

*Revenue Streams* represent the return company generates from customer segments; understanding the pricing and value correlation, and how to pursue wanted segments with suitable pricing mechanisms to bring about profitable and productive trading. (Osterwalder et al, 2010, 30-31.) Relying on revenues from advertising are usual in businesses dealing with media and event organizing, but also increasingly at software and service sectors.

(Osterwalder et al, 2010, 32.)

*Key Resources* name the most critical assets company requires to create and offer their value proposition. The key resources can be owned by the company, leased or acquired from key partners, and they can be categorized as follows. *Physical* assets are for example facilities, machines and distribution networks. *Intellectual* assets such as brands, partnerships and customer databases have become increasingly important resources as they are difficult to develop and may create substantial value when carrying out success. *Human* resources are required at every enterprise, but crucial in industries relying on knowledge and specific skills. *Financial* resources are ones concerning for instance cash, liquid securities and credit accounts supporting company's efficient operations. (Osterwalder et al, 2010, 34-35.)

*Key Activities* are the crucially important activities company takes to succeed at every area of the business model, which secure the value delivery to the customer as the required actions are detected and done properly. *Production* activities relate delivering product/service in large quantities and/or in superior quality. *Problem solving* activities require coming up with new, suitable solution to individual customer needs and issues, for example within consultancies. *Platform/Network* activities concern businesses where all activities are designed on and dominated by a platform (eBay, Microsoft), and key activities may relate to for example managing or promoting this key component. (Osterwalder et al, 2010, 36-37.)

*Key Partnerships* presents the network of parties company need to get the business model to work. Alliances with suppliers and partners enable increasing efficiency, risk reduction and achieving resources. Identification of this partners supports company to route the benefits for useful purpose. (Osterwalder et al, 2010, 38-39.)

*Cost Structure* can be identified after defining three *Key*- building blocks, which determine actions of creating and delivering value, caring relations to customers and generating revenues – which in return generate costs. Costs should be minimized in every business model, still keeping in mind that cost structures may be cost-driven, value-driven, or as in many cases, both. (Osterwalder et al, 2010, 40-41.)

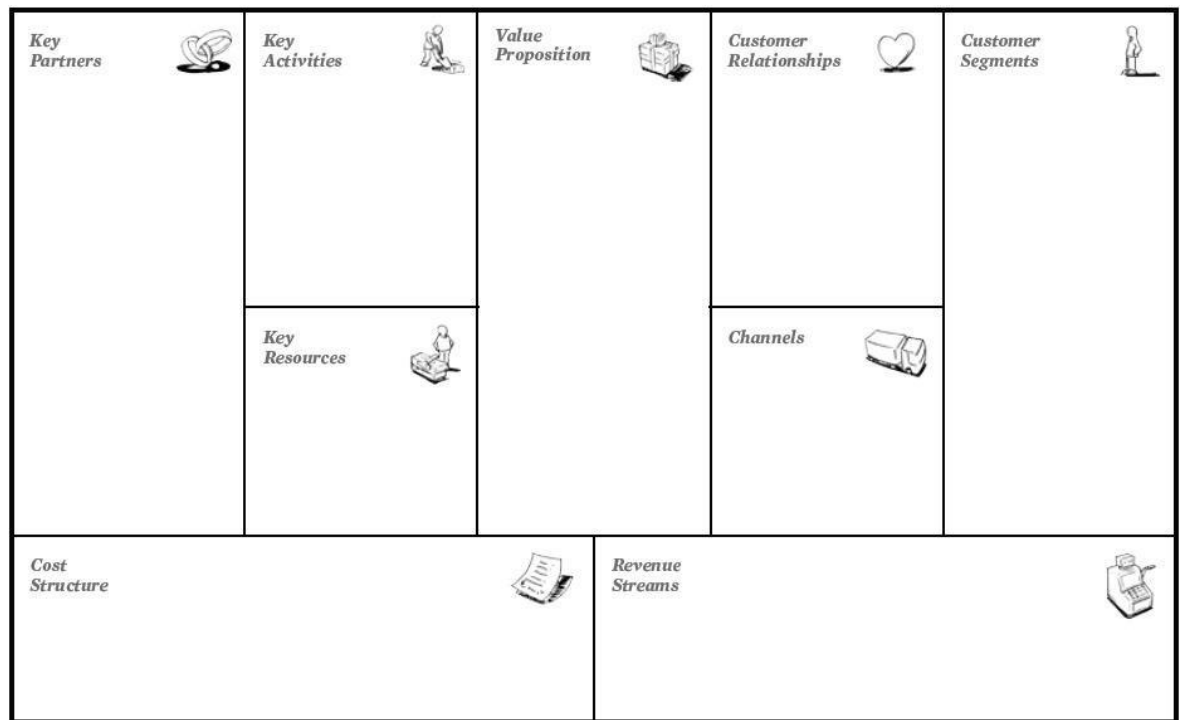


Figure 1. The Business Model Canvas (Osterwalder, A. & Pigneur, Y., 2010, 44.)

## 2.3 Marketing

According to Raymond, M.A. & Tanner, J.F. (2015) The American Marketing Association defines marketing as “the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large.” (Raymond, M.A. & Tanner, J.F., 2015, chapter 1.1.) Raymond et al. (2015) have renamed the well-known components of early 1950s a marketing mix, also known as four P’s (Product, Place, Price, Promotion) to describe better the action marketing professionals do, and are now called: Creating, Communication, Delivering and Exchanging. (Raymond et al. 2015, chapter 1.1.) All these actions revolve around one aim; creating value. Personal value is created when a buyer receives benefits that meet ones needs and expectations, after the price and effort is taken into account. And because of these individual differences, the obtained value varies greatly according to the consumer.

Since the time of 4Ps, it has been argued that those four fit for products, and 7Ps developed by Booms and Bitner at 1981, presented three extra P’s to foster the delivery of services: People, Physical evidence and Processes. (Figure 2). This mix is to simplify what where the building blocks of marketing, before moving to e-marketing and the somewhat different order of importance. For e-marketers it’s mostly just a framework – just after the target markets and brand positioning has been determined in the marketing strategy, marketer can consider what elements are crucial to take note of to achieve the best value

possible. (Chaffey et al. 2013, 57.)

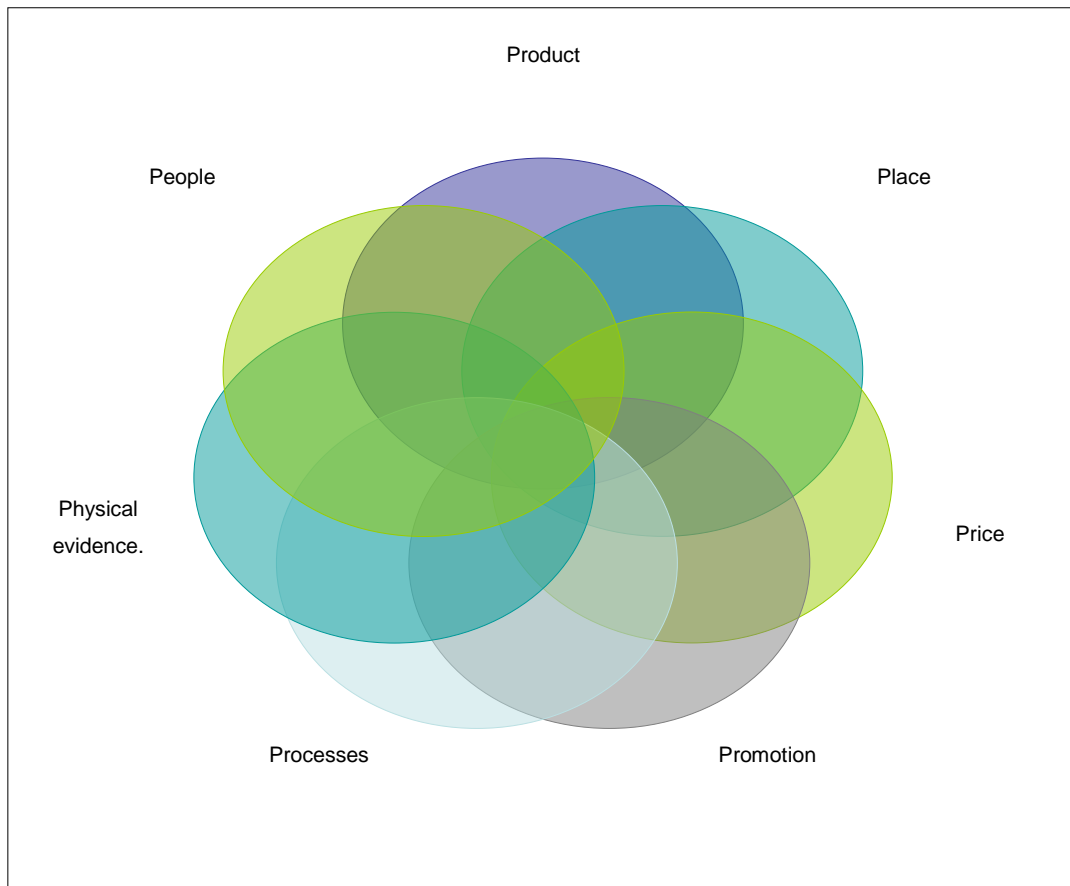


Figure 2. The 7ps of classic marketing mix by Booms and Bitner (1981).

### 2.3.1 E-marketing

Over the time of internet, companies have changed to e-business, either partly or completely. And in the heart of e-business is e-marketing, which has been revolutionized by social media while “mobile marketing has (finally) become mainstream.” (Chaffey, D. & Smith, PR., 2013, xv preface.) E-business take in automation extending to all value chain processes of business such as purchasing, logistics and sales. E-marketing uses e.g. mobiles, webpages, email, interactive applications and online ads, to all marketing connected processes. Creating a continuous communication flow between customers, suppliers and customers themselves, is a key element of marketing, where highlighted focus today is getting closer to customers to understand them better to create better services. (Chaffey et al. 2013, 14-15.)

A business which allows customer participation in development purposes, can benefit significantly when putting the customer at the heart of all online activities. When customer

shares his interests, requires services, suggests improvement, in any form takes a part on the communication - it helps creating more customer driven business (Chaffey et al. 2013, 15.), which at its best may serve all parties, even the ones only remotely connected to these mentioned factors.

“A company’s marketing plan flows from its strategic plan “, says Ramond et al. (2015), but when deciding how to get there, meaning strategy, one needs to first decide where that there is. Company should define and communicate clear objectives before rushing into challenging and tactical e-tools, which will motivate good marketing, direct suitable resources and gain better results. (Chaffey et al. 2013, 22, 24.) The following listing of 5Ss represent well the benefits of e-marketing for the company. Establishing a strategy of how the wanted benefit will be gathered, becomes easier by setting specific goals related to each of the five areas.

Sell – Grow sales over extensive distribution, promotion and sales.

Serve – Add value by valuing customer’s development suggestions received online or give offer them extra benefits.

Speak – Get closer by forming two-way communication customs; email, chat, competitions and surveys.

Save – Reduce costs by generating production actions online.

Sizzle – Boost the brand by offering something new online, while simultaneously appear familiar.

(Chaffey et al. 2013, 22-23.)

### **2.3.2 Managing social business marketing**

According to Chaffey et al. (2013) e-marketing can be considered ‘quick, cheap or easy’ for the reason businesses have made it highly competitive and it’s constantly growing popularity in customers’ attention. To apply social media for communications useful for the business means and marketing purposes, recognizing what socializing online is at its’ core? And “that it represents both a challenge and an opportunity”. (Chaffey et al. 2013, 216.)

“Social media is the term commonly give to Internet and mobile-based channels and tools that allow users to interact with each other and share opinions and content. As the name implies, social media involves the building of communities or networks and encouraging participation and engagement.” (CIPR Social Media Panel, 2011)

The challenge is that when socializing, people are spending free time with their friends and colleagues, and most likely don’t want to be bothered and interrupted by brands and advertisement. The possibility lays where communication extents to learning or shopping;



then information flows between brand and customer. (Chaffey et al. 2013, 218.)

*Social media platforms* are interesting to follow for their constantly changing features and usability, and creation of completely new ones. (Chaffey et al. 2013, 475.) Here are few most typical ones used for marketing purposes. In most countries *social networks*; Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, are the core platforms for consumer and business audiences. Magazines that have online version with their blogs and articles, possible to comment are called *social publishing and news*. *Social niche communities* are independent forums and networks. *Social streaming* media sites include photos (Pinterest), video (Vimeo) and podcasts (iTunes). Many search engines are also turning to *social search* platforms as one can set a username to vote on platforms and create private sub-groups to save and share found results. (Chaffey et al. 2013, 215-216.)

Thought the assessment of customer satisfaction might be easier through constant access to these platforms thanks to mobiles and tablets, rapid changes on the media structures create faster changing environment for e-marketing managers to manage. Continuous review and exploration of new digital marketing opportunities is needed to stay in good standing. (Chaffey et al. 2013, 475-476.) The power of social media is changing fundamentally the way people interact, form relations and make decisions, how they relate to work and purchasing goods – Chaffey et al. (2013) refers to IBM, calling this as social business, which is the next step of the global business evolution. (Chaffey et al. 2013, 480.) Social business refers to online communities, social networks and cooperative groups generated by the organizations. These allow possibilities for e.g. proactive development process, spreading information for target group and crowdsourcing by having discussion where company act as the third party in discussion, as 'triologue'; customer can talk to each other and generate content, while brand is amongst the customers. (Chaffey et al. 2013, 482-483.)

E-planning is ideally integrated with offline marketing plan and seeks the same results as business strategy. A realistic plan offers e-manager control on where the company is drifting and reduces stress. Customer led business, as mentioned before, acquires communication and suitable content development to participate the customer into the design or change process. "Marketers who understand and influence customer engagement better than their competitors are more likely to develop stronger brands and more loyal customers." (Chaffey et al. 2013, 137.)

## **2.4 Social, global and local factors on customer involvement**

Evans, M., Foxall, G. and Jamal A. (2006) explore consumer values in the context of individualistic culture recognizable due to emphasizing separateness, internal attributes and uniqueness of person, in which time is regarded as tangible commodity to be saved or spent (e.g. UK). In comparison to collectivist cultures, which appear more connected and highly focused on social context, time is treated as a less tangible source to improve relationships (e.g. Japan).

Marieke de Mooij (2011) explains identity as the idea one has about oneself, in terms of desirable values, social group memberships and personality traits. Identity is means also ones capacity to fulfill expectations. Amongst individualists, most Western cultures, the identity of self and others is assessed based on individual traits such as personality, other characteristics (age, occupation) and material symbols and possessions, which may serve in purpose of shaping ones' image towards one they would like to have, as ideal self. (Mooij, M. 2011, 129-130.) "Image is how others see and judge a person." (Mooij, M. 2011, 129.)

Global markets has created a situation where better understanding of cultural differences and similarities, as well their effect on customers motivational factors in buying and advancing certain lifestyles, is the most significant. (Evans et al. 2006, 203-204.) According to Mooij (2011) consumer behaviour is a process that include all actions where people are selecting, purchasing, using and disposing goods, services, ideas or experiences to satisfy their needs and wants. For this lifestyle segmentation is useful and applicable within cultures. (Mooij, M. 2011, 10, 20.) She also writes that "people used to be imagined in a culture. Now, culture is in their heads" (Mooij, M. 2011, 21.), to highlight how personality and culture cannot be separated when trying to understand the influence of social and environmental impacts have on person. (Mooij, M. 2011, 21.)

Evans et al. states that we interact with others continuously, as a result of being social species. This leads us to social groups at school, work and leisure time, in addition to our family, which is usually the primary close group where we belong to. Group members influence each other, and norms take place when individuals seek common ground and acceptance. (Evans et al. 2006, 170, 173.) Growing number of repetitively changing groups, which identify themselves with sharing emotions, passions and style, can be called as tribes. (Evans et al. 2006, 179-182.) These tribes hold powerful effects for consuming behaviour and marketing, because they interact with brands, associating them communally with lifestyles they pursue. (Evans et al. 2006, 170, 182.) While people aspire

to belong to their social group, they show independence and freedom to some extent by choosing the same product that their friends, but in different colour or taste. (Evans et al. 2006, 170, 173.) "Sometimes apparent individualism is actually tribal social group behaviour; different enough, but within the safety of a group." (Evans et al. 2006, 182.)

It has been predicted that global communications are to create a global congruent customer culture, homogenizing people's values. (Mooij, M. 2011, 5, 11.) For global advertising this assumption means similar segmenting across borders, looking for unified methods instead of variety of them. The advertisers may attempt to modify their brand to appeal so called global tribe, people sharing the seemingly similar lifestyle. But this global market does not exist. Yet people have the similar lifestyle and can buy the same product, they use it to different extent. They also won't behave as consistent group of purchasers, because of their diverse values, ways of thinking and behaving. (Mooij, M. 2011, 9-10.) What comes to homogenous value formation, time and practice has showed that instead of destructive, globalization has had a rather positive impact on revival of local cultural identities. (Mooij, M. 2011, 5.)

### **3 Experience chronicles and their importance to business**

Sections of this chapter explain experience, the economy that takes shape around it and storytelling emerging over industry boundaries offering new tools of engaging customers and employees to company processes. All these subjects were found important for the thesis project creation to supplement concept with rarer used elements and emphasize customer role in the prosperous implementation of the service package in the making.

#### **3.1 Experience**

Experience is important, positive and memorable, producing a personal change in the one undergoing it, says Sanna Tarssanen (2009, 11.) James Gilmore and Joseph Pine (2011) explain experience as the fourth economic offering, distinguishing it from commodities, goods and services, to which it has been associated and generally unrecognized until now. Experience differs from service as much as service from goods. (Gilmore, J.H. & Pine, B.J., 2011, 3.) "A new economy has arisen to increase revenues and create new jobs - - to create new value." Gilmore et al. 2011, 17).

Gilmore et al. describe Walt Disney as the beginner of experience expansion. He opened Disneyland to California, USA. This theme park that was nothing like before, like movie scenes brought to life, where people were rather treated as guests than customers, and they were not just entertained but wrapped into and involved to the story. (Gilmore et al. 2011, 3-4.) Tarssanen (2009) clarifies this saying that experience economy professionals are more like in a role suitable to their job description. (Tarssanen, S. 2009, 8.) Through customization, dramaturgy and making use of all the possible sensations, the cast members stage the company's offering, experience, resulting rich inherently personal outcome within each guest. (Gilmore et al. 2011, 4, 17; Tarssanen, 2009, 8.)

Gilmore and Pine (2011) present that as experience is often assimilated to the entertainment industry, remembering that experiences are about engaging the guest and initiate change on an emotional, physical, intellectual or spiritual level. When there is similarities in performing something, the value of the intangible experience lays in the long lasting, strong memories, people greatly desire. (Gilmore et al. 2011, 45, 18-19.) Engagement of guests may happen on multiple dimensions, but considering the four sections which are connected with two most important dimensions. Activity and passivity of guest, in connection to ones' absorption and immersion to the offered events, can help to analyze the total experience (Figure 3.).

Guest participation dimension pictures the activity of a participant; passive customer does not influence the performance, but listens or watches, whereas active customer keenly act on creating his own experience. In some cases e.g. races and concerts ones' contribution can show by being present and creating the atmosphere for others. The other dimension depicts the depth of connection uniting the customer to the offered performance, ii contrasts from absorption; performance in away comes to the customers attention and into his mind, in comparison to immersion when customer is deeply engaged and becomes physically part of the experience. (Gilmore et al. 2011, 45-46.)

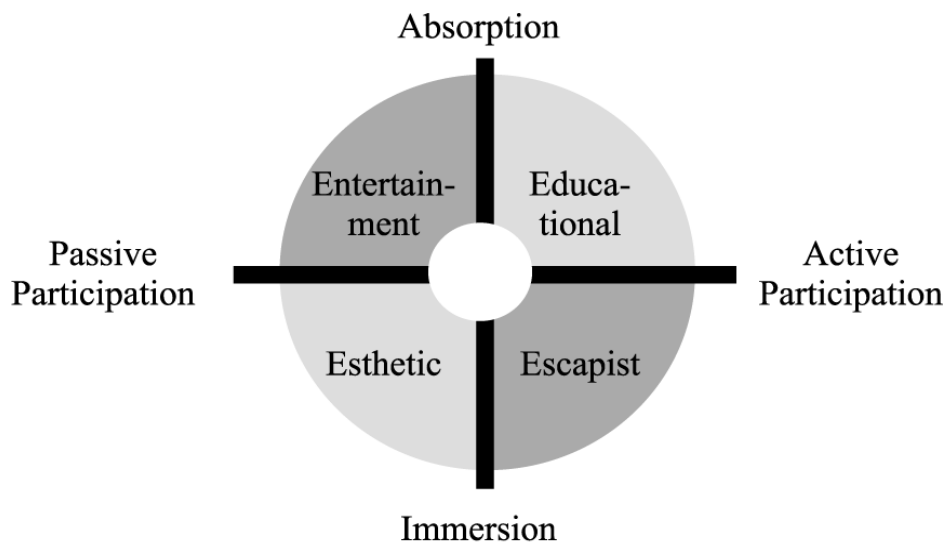


Figure 3. The Experience Realms by Pine and Gilmore (2011)

In an escapist experience individual is actively carrying out the activities needed, and steps into the flow it forms. Educational situation could happen when person is in a situation enjoying and being active, but he doesn't need to focus so entirely. Watching a television programme without immersing to its events, could explain an entertaining situation. An esthetic, passive experience could be when person just stands and enjoys the view, looking and listening. (Tarssanen, 2009, 10.) A holistic, grand experience would combine all these four realms, centering on the "sweet spot". (Gilmore et al. 2011, 58.)

To these realms Tarssanen (2009) adds experience elements, six building blocks that support and ensure that all the well planned elements conclude as compact and compelling whole. *Individuality* means the possibility to generate unique product for every customer, through customization and flexibility offer an experience impossible to copy or re-live. *Multisensory* recalls after carefully planned (what, where, when) and noticeable, but not overwhelming amount of sensory stimulants. *Contrast* is wanted to separate the product as new, exotic and extraordinary in comparison to customers' background, nationality and culture. *Interaction* is the result of successful communication and heightens a feeling of

community – feeling of acceptance and connection to others makes one feel appreciation, supporting this way the experience of change within individual. *Authenticity* means credibility of the product, defined by the customer and his opinion as reliable and true. Another element joined with authenticity is a *story*, gathering together the components to create a bigger whole to mesmerize the audience. (Tarssanen, 2009, 12-15.)

### **3.2 Stories taking on businesses**

Walt Disney started with a theme for the entire amusement park, showing good example for the rest, engagement wouldn't happen without a story and telling it. Since that storytelling has become a used and better understood tool on other fields outside the experience industry. Professionals of management, marketing, communications, sales, training and teaching, and none the least product and service innovation, have initiated the benefits of this compelling method. (Rauhala, M. & Vikström, T., 2014, 30-31.)

Year 2006 Blake Mycoskie started telling a story after travelling to Argentina, where he witnessed the lack of shoes on poor children. He wanted to find a longer lasting aid for their genuine need, and after looking for new idea of a for-profit business he came up with "a solution that guaranteed a constant flow of shoes". (Mycoskie, B., 2011, 6.) The concept is simple, appealing, and has nothing to do with calculations, except for this; One for One. Every time a pair of TOMS (=Tomorrow's Shoes) is sold, a child in need is going to receive a pair. (Mycoskie, B., 2011, 6.) Since that TOMS has grown sensationally, forwarded over 35 million pair of new shoes, and enlarged the business to sunglasses, accessories and clothing for women, men and kids. Now beside of shoes, TOMS is giving sight through surgery, glasses and medical treatments; water; safe birth by providing training and material needed to help in delivery. (TOMS Shoes, 26.2.2015.)

"Stories are the most primitive and purest form of communication", says Mycoskie (2011, 25.) Ideas and values have been embedded in stories throughout the history. They've been explained, enjoyed, learned and passed on. And now business have started using them in their own favor, leaving simplified one channel medias behind them and introducing themselves differently, emotionally evoking, to the customers, (Mycoskie, B., 2011, 25-26.) They are, as mentioned earlier, driving the businesses and forming their own opinions and spreading them to their own communities, and for this getting their attention to tell them a story worth remembering is relevant. (Chaffey et al. 2013, 15.)

Rauhala and Vikström (2014) divide business to areas which have certain targets and explain how stories would suit in achieving them. In marketing storytelling would provoke

feelings to gain attention and set a base for emotional connection needed to build a strong brand. Managing the brand is easier in the future, when branding has been successful and shaped a wanted kind of image in to the customers' minds guiding their attention to bring about a purchase decision. Also pinpointing descriptive information about the customers' values and reflections is easier when they've written or told them out in narrative form. In business communications concretization of the message is also important; when presenting complicated and many time abstract issues, use of e.g. storyboard clarifies the details and promotes understanding instead of cross-talk. Story can make one remember and get enthusiastic on a matter effectively presented. (Rauhala et al. 2014, 30.)

But where do the stories come from, if the business exist already or you are no Blake Mycoskie? *Story capital* (translator's note: *tarinapääoma*) is, and combines of, all reachable sources business has within. Rauhala et al. (2014) state that story is a versatile business tool, but to get started with using it, businesses must learn to recognize and make use of their story capital effectively in right situations and for the planned purpose. Here's three starting tips how to detect story capital and where to scoop *raw materials* from. Firstly from the business itself, its purpose of existence, name, people and beginning times of the company. Then from the customers, how they've been heard and helped, challenges and victories company has faced. After which by viewing over solutions company has provided, how the products and services have been beneficial to its customers. Answering the question "what you want to achieve?" helps detecting the *goals and audience* for ones stories. (Rauhala et al. 2014, 37.) The key is to unravel what's the aim and who's in the audience. *Channels and form* as the focus can stimulate ideas of proper style and format, and scale whether the channels and story content are in line. (Rauhala et al. 2014, 36-37.)

At TEDTalks 2009 Seth Godin made a speech ("The tribes we lead") encouraging listeners who are about to create services to tell stories. He's view into this is that instead of persuading people to want something, gather together the ones who already have an interest to talk about something specific. He says that as these tribes are given a leader to organize them and a challenge – they will care enough to make bigger things happen. They might be disconnected, but yearning to be connected. By connecting people for a cause, people can be the source of bigger chances in their community. (Godin, S. 2009.)

## 4 Conclusion

The aim was to assemble valuable theory of concept development, slightly stressing strategy and marketing, alongside with social behavior, experience economy and relation they have with each other. After which these would be used as step marks to support the undergoing project. Collection of recent, beneficial and in-depth theory was discovered with the help of comprehensive library collections of the university and earlier theses relating the current topic. Intention to collect more authoritative knowledge over fashion, enterprises, the field of subjects' growth and tourism in Helsinki existed, but official sources were gone short. The development process was considered more important to present and the less formal sources such as news, articles, blogs and unofficial discussions were considered qualified and educating enough allowing to continue the work.

Key learnings from the theory compilation will support the project process and its functionality. The extensiveness and thoroughness of strategy development, which came more unambiguous through Osterwalders' & Pigneurs' Business Model Canvas (Osterwalder, A. & Pigneur, Y., 2010), which will help to verify the functions included to the project planning and execution. Accenting the growth of experience and storytelling as conducive part of the customer engagement, will assist on directing the concept delivery path planning to the customer and performance distributing extra value to the customer experience. Studying the social structures, even tentatively, brought to notice that the first remarked assumption of customer lifestyles might confuse, and what works on local level, might not apply valid globally, and for this significance of nowadays demanded personalized service was taken seriously. The strategy of concepts' communication manners are subject to change due to the consideration that when customer is involved into the reforming, one most likely contributes on new customer acquisition and shares ones knowledge to the company and partners too. The potential of online based services and usability of various channels to support pursuing the same goals was recognized, as well as the importance of comprehensive know-how and managing skills multichannel market demands from the company.



## **5 Project: Vintage Hunt System**

In this section the product development process is presented in chronological order to describe truthfully the actions and consequences that followed. The projects current situation, expectations and necessary actions to eventually start implementing the plans during the future months is also presented. During the autumn 2014 in thesis seminar, the project started as graduate started to gather material for the thesis topic proposal at seminars poster day. Coming up with an idea and taking a hold it, turned out to be the starting point for the whole project.

Better qualified information of the field and support for the claim that anticipated customer group exists were intentionally sought after. The object of the proposal was to develop a simple nonetheless appealing service product to help locals and visitors to find the growing number of vintage and second-hand clothing stores in Helsinki. (Appendix 1.)

The biggest issues are approached at the “Critical redefining” of the service, when the arisen problems were confronted and the desire to choose the best solution to be capable to carry on were great. After information gathering, weighing the order of precedence when planning and writing the theoretical share of the thesis brought the focus back to strategy development and time limitations. This lead to making decisions and forming more detailed and concrete concept by using Business Model Canvas.

The prospective performances planned have been planned before execution by predictions of what actions are needed, what talents to look for and what might happen for this project in the near future. The project team would provide information collected from the entrepreneurs and pictures added by the customers, at the webpage that is promoted to new customers through partners, printed flyer/maps and demo tours.

### **5.1 Idea**

The idea development started by going through and listing observed trends, events and noticed interests amongst young adults. Material collected during studies and hobbies was were taken into discussion and twiddled. The urge was to come up with something that would combine already existing passion into a new project, ending up as bundle of advice and adventure; knowledge and experiencing. These next topics emerged quickly growing the interest to stay developing possibilities associated with them. And the development continues.

Helsinki, capital of Finland, has raised its image and been noticed as an option alongside the other northern capitals. Lonely Planet destination guide refers to Helsinki with clubs, pubs, restaurants and design shops, but highlights amusingly its urban culture.

“Though Helsinki can seem like a younger sibling to other Scandinavian capitals, it’s the one that went to art school, scorns pop music, is working in a cutting-edge design studio and hangs out with friends who like black and plenty of piercings.” (Lonely Planet: Finland – Helsinki)

The official tourism and travel information collective Visit Helsinki has been showing great effort on upgrading the city brand. The webpage shows fresh, versatile and lively view into the city through various projects, which take different approaches through hobbies, arts, services and profession, even like locals. HEL YEAH! Feel the urban flow of Helsinki combines street events, event venues, festivals and food happenings onto one page, including lots of beautiful photography.

Another personally recognized smaller group of people, passing side by side with mainstream buyers, are enthusiastic vintage (meaning clothing and accessories made from 20th-century to 20 years before the present) and second-hand (meaning something previously owned by another; not a new item) lovers. Students and young professionals, equipped with opinions on their lifestyle and style; what and how they want to purchase and power to act accordingly. It’s been mentioned that when people are more aware on their own behavior and how it affects their surroundings, they tend to pay attention on the quality and price relation of products and for this are more interested on garments constancy and timeless design. Flea markets are known to be easy and budget friendly way to sell and buy used pieces, but the growing number of vintage and second-hand boutiques offers generally more specific and carefully selected, bought and many times personally searched collections of rare if not unique treasures.

Coincident group and type of customer can be identified from travelers too, both Finnish and international; they arrive to Helsinki with the thought they might make good findings, also from the supply of once-used, interesting and personalized items. The problem seems to lay on the constantly changing scene and existence of shops and mixed information one needs to figure out themselves or with the help of hosts, locals and acquaintances if lucky. The one and only quickly found second-hand tips were on a webpage Like a Local Guide which collects Helsinki info with the help of assigned locals and presents them neatly under activity topics e.g. shopping. The guide is also available in application form. (Like A Local Guide, 7.3.2015.)

## 5.2 Topic proposal

First it seemed there were no problem on finding the vintage and second-hand shops if one looks them up actively. But as the idea seemed worthy of keen attention with some hiding potential, more structured creation methods and more active scouting were taken into use to expand the fairly superficial personal view, confirm the hunch and shape suitable answer.

After following the full list of tips of brainstorming from Tuulaniemi (Tuulaniemi, J. 2011. 181-188.) and polishing all the extra off the core, a first version of the service was presented at the thesis seminar poster day as topic proposal. (Appendix 1.)

The customer was categorized as ordinary girl or boy, who has the interest and curiosity to purchase and wear these mentioned clothing and accessories as well as to consume more ethically and promote ones image. Obstacles are potential customers' doubts concerning their assumptions about their own behavior, price, style and shops visiting norms. "I don't dare to visit small shops alone." "Vintage is more expensive." "Where would I find the type of things I like with suitable price?" The selection of stores would cover ten private own vintage and/or second-hand shops, 8 of which focused mainly on women's clothing and 2 on men's outfits. The final product would be a hand-size booklet, including foreword, spread sheet for each shop with picture and column for introduction and facts for example location, opening hours and social media info. The map would depict the areas at Helsinki where shops are located and mention possible transportations connections. (Appendix 7; Appendix 8.)

Tentatively the purpose was to benefit also the store owners by providing additional boost for their marketing, activate new customers and encourage shop keepers to contemplate their competition and own possibilities more actively. There are many groups that collect specific styled services under one name, publish maps and listings such as Design District Helsinki; Design on Tampere and Food Helsinki? HEL YEAH! to promote themselves more effectively. Design District Helsinki is a neighborhood association that started year 2005 to gather together local creative professionals from fields of e.g. art, decoration; jewelry and antiques, who provide locals and visitors opportunities to shop, dine, stay overnight and experience – simultaneously heightening their own visibility and Helsinki as design destination. The area is not strictly defined, and changes as new boutiques and companies join. The map of district can be viewed and uploaded from the association webpage. (Design District Helsinki, 6.3.2015.) Design On Tampere (DOT) is an association that aims to promote design and city culture by producing events and publishing

Designdistrict map at Tampere. At year 2015 the map is published for the 6th time and presents “the most interesting boutiques, cafés, restaurants and galleries in the city”. (Design On Tampere, 6.3.2015.) Restaurants in Helsinki are presented on Food Helsinki? HEL YEAH! - restaurant brochure that was published during the winter 2014. It introduces visitor to five themed and colored food districts; historical, green, South of Espo, design and hipster. (HEL YEAH!, 6.3.2015.) (Appendix 7; Appendix 8.)

### 5.3 Critical redefining

Next step of the ongoing creation process was to generate creative confidence workshop (Kelley, D. & Kelley, T. 2013.) where all ideas, solutions and propagation proposals were accepted. Then they were assorted and combined on mind-maps, drawings and pictures. (Appendix 2.) The most inspirational sources were the discussions with consumers suitable to the preliminary customer description, enthusiastic vintage and second hand clothing store keepers and visits to the stores as field research. Continuous and active usage of brainstorming and bodystorming assisted on realizing the best practices and modify ideas and channels to practical services. And as the assurance that this kind of advising and activating service would be welcomed by the possible customers with interest and willingness to try – the concept kept expanding creating new obstacles and doubts on the feasibility.

The project was left drifting only with vague strategic line draws, in the concern of accidentally deleting something worth developing. When aiming to concretize the project plan and wanted outcome of the project a lot of critical questions were raised concerning especially resources and marketing. Solutions to financing, need of professional talents to develop graphics and content, confirmed customer segments and the suitable channel or many to reach them were needed to be found to continue service development any further. Or yet to make the business model close to ready for pitching it to the shop owners or let alone to the sponsors. One of the biggest issues was to determine if the shop owners are also a customer segment, and if so how to make sure they benefit financially on being a part of this service chain? Discussing with persons suitable to the essential customer segment, some owners and people who own expertise on project nature work, assist considerable on maintaining control and decision making throughout the project.

Before Business Model Canvas (Osterwalder, A. & Pigneur, Y., 2010) (Appendix 4.) was used to modify, better and specify the strategic elements, a few favorite themes were decided to keep and be concentrated on. Uniqueness of the shops and personas behind the scenes provide interesting and rich material for *storytelling*. Providing customers with ad-

vice encouraging them to practice *shopping self-help* to experience new places and new findings. Attract *attention* on vintage and second-hand search as a hobby, as well as on *experiencing* the great selection of shops within Helsinki. The next chapter opens and explains the experience concept as it has been specified heretofore, going under the name Vintage Hunt System.

#### **5.4 Concept and Plan of Actions: Vintage Hunt System**

Vintage Hunt System pursues to produce an interesting, simple, joyful, entertaining experience concept, combined of several functions both offline and online, which would benefit both vintage and second-hand shop owners and the customers recently introduced with the genre. VHS provides interactive, multichannel marketing boost for the owners and asks them to be involved in developing and offering fun, alternative practices to shop the treasures at their stores, to engage local and visiting customers by sharing information and advice. Both of these viewpoints are taken under consideration, but in limitations of the groundwork, emphasizing the customers' experience; arousing curiosity, exceeding expectations and helping him/her to explore the city, is the key component even in co-operative planning with the owners. These strategic decisions are showed in the Business Model Canvas used to manage and modify VHS. (Appendix 4.)

The core of Vintage Hunt Systems' *value proposition* comprises of saving time, learning something, and having fun while finding quality products and fascinating places. Whereas for the shop owners it offers a new platform to get volume among new customer group, gain attention to their specialties and interact more actively with the network.

The main *customer segment* for the developed experience concept is consumers either living in Helsinki or visiting the city for leisure and entertainment. People fitting to this are youngsters and adults from 15 to 40 years of age, all genders, who use internet and mobile devices to search information and help planning their leisure time spend locally as well as travels abroad, search activities and to-do tips at the destination, in this case Helsinki. A person belonging to targeted group would be a beginner or hobbyist familiarized with the vintage and second-hand as genre, solvent and willingness to pay for uniqueness and style, in addition to growing curiosity to know the scene and its actors better. These characteristics present a customer type seeking after supply and services of a specific niche. For overall strategy completing this means versatile expectations and lifestyles to comprehend, when aiming to accomplish successful value delivery.

The main focus *company customers* are entrepreneurs in Helsinki, who own and run a vintage and/or second-hand shop selling clothing, accessories, hats, shoes and bags. (Appendix 3.) It doesn't matter how long the shop has existed, if it's located outside the city centre, or if it doesn't have a clear image yet, as long as the shop owner and possible sale personnel are excited about being a part of and doing one's deed on VHS network; give interviews, share company story and permit photographing the shop. Enthusiastic attitude towards customer service and high standard of product selection were also key elements when selecting suitable stores to start the project with. If the concept receives favourable attention amongst the first shops and the network builds up and shows results, this sampling could later enlarge to cover all the vintage and second-hand shops suitable to the features above.

#### **5.4.1 Channels of customer engagement and value delivery**

The channels for marketing and advertising are desired to bring to effect the wanted reaction: raise curiosity to get familiarized with the Vintage Hunt System. The plan is to reach successfully both of the delineated target groups: local and visiting actives, through the most suitable channels they use, associate with lifestyle, shopping and hobbies, and don't mind commercial content. Raising awareness about the company's (referring to VHS) existence, services and products would happen through several social networking services, each selected for specific purpose in addition to offline actions; prominent yet momentary street promotion and first set of printed flyer/maps are to be given out to the shops, and shared to locations such as libraries, cafés and tourist info, as a start.

The actual launch would happen by organizing two demo-tours; the first one would be only for privately invited lifestyle and style bloggers whereas the second one would be for limited amount of participants but free to join. After the posts about the demo-tour, locals' attention is planned to be captured by growing presence at social media, starting with Facebook, Instagram, and homepage of Vintage Hunt System (Appendix 6.) that utilizes both mentioned in participating customers to content creation. Facebook company page is used to publish posts and grow visibility on the social networks due to the possibility to share its content on other social network platforms as well. This overlapping use of material is likely to act viable when considering the growing use and number of social networks. According to Tilastokeskus (2012) out of the Finns 16-24 years of age 72% follow at least one social network daily, and from 25-34 years of age 62%. Weekly happening activity was even higher and presumably the numbers have continued to grow leading more companies on all industries to react and enlarge their customer relationship operations online. Instagram profile is used for brand building; offer a peek behind the scenes of

VHS and activating users to publish with certain identifiers (hashtag signs, #) to refer to place, product or activities concerning Vintage Hunt System. The shortcuts for used social media profiles are found from the websites top bar, marked with their logos.

Visiting customers are planned to be reached along with social media through advertising at travel sites like Spotted by Locals ([www.spottedbylocals.com](http://www.spottedbylocals.com)) and Like A Local ([www.likealocalguide.com](http://www.likealocalguide.com)) in addition to Visit Helsinki, tourist information and selected accommodation businesses. Friendly, relaxed and helpful – these should be the features connected to VHS, from the very first touch point.

The first observable benefit of the concept is delivered to the customer when he or she visits the Vintage Hunt System homepage where one finds an *internet based booklet* presenting a selection of Helsinki's best vintage and second-hand shops, their stories and people behind the scenes, description of their products and useful information e.g. opening hours, location and links; a *video* with rousing introduction to the *treasure hunt map*; cartoonish yet in scale, city map with all the shops, recommended walking and tram routes and advice on how to be involved with VHS also after the touring. Map can be saved to ones device in pdf- format or printed on A4 sized paper. The webpage has information about the VHS's project team, vision and mission to familiarize customer with those stories as well. (Appendix 6.)

To reach and get noticed by the entrepreneurs, besides the advertising online aimed to the public, such as mentioned above, the communication would build on dedicated personal assistance and interaction. Firstly the pitching and launch of co-operation would happen at meetings agreed on as a result of a personal visit to meet the owner. The interaction would be kept close yet eligible relaxed, happening through face to face discussions, calls or emails. From the very beginning entrepreneurs are to get across with the emphasis of co-creational and mutually agreed actions which are to benefit customer companies. Creating appreciative and dedicated teamwork between owners and VHS project team will appear as enjoyable meetings and interviews, producing pleasing, coherent content at the VHS channels; webpage, social media, printed material and in future potentially organized events.

When a customer gets excited enough about the VHS to select suitable shops, take the map on use, and head for visits, they can recognize the right shops marked with palm-size neon purple brand logo stickers, marking the partners belonging to Vintage Hunt System. (Appendix 5.) After that receiving proficient, favourable customer service and convenient experience, depends on the shop personnel talent and carrying out their part making posi-

tive feedback and returning visits promising.

*Involvement and co-creation* are elements of the next level of value delivery as the homepage will also serve as a platform for pictures and reviews customers provide of the shops, treasures and people they've found and stories about the experience they had. Emphasizing the significance of delivering a platform intended to gather together community sharing similar interests and want to offers information in attractive and likeable form is openly brought to notice to encourage the wanted content development activity; reviewing, publishing pictures and sharing content. (Appendix 6.) All the parties are suggested to attend to the community formation to make certain that feedback, questions and suggestions are noticed and commented even taken into action by the actor they are addressed to.

#### **5.4.2 Key Resources and Key Activities**

Implementation and continuation of Vintage Hunt System requires a variety of resources and activities to support and fulfill each other enabling prospective solid growth and supply addition. Some of the most critical actions happen before the concept would be pitched to the companies none the less launched to public. Designating the ones predicted crucially important are opened below.

*Assembling the project team* should take place as soon as to advance the building up of a versatile, enthusiastic, talented and proficient group of professionals. Would be recommendable to show team leadership from the beginning by discussing the strategies and operational plan to clarify everyone's remits and expertise. Also investing in team spirit by getting acquainted with each other and generating ice breaking activities, would gain trust amongst the team members and promote open, relaxed communication which supports the ongoing cheer to exceeding one selves and succeeding with the activities required from team, pair or individual. This openness would secure fast reactions and delegating tasks at the moment of change e.g. sickness. Urging described behaviour within the team will effect on the quality of interaction between VHS and companies, as well as VHS and customers. This supports the possibilities to deliver value in form of up-to-date information and well operating software.

Team provides concept with crucial *human resources*: creativity, self-guidance and other specific professional knowledge needed to execute and maintain the VHS channels. The *teams' key activities* include everything from planning to redesign the content. More in detail the key activities include planning and realisation of the shop selection, contacting,



gathering and publishing the content of the webpage, graphic designing and programming. In simple every production level needed to actualize the project. Certainly the rapid change of market and technology will create challenges and staying up to date is as definitive as modifying the offer more suitable to the needs and trends of customer segment. Shop owners and their shops appear as *intellectual and physical resources*. Owners are important component of VHS business model as they provide detailed, qualified, specific knowledge about their field, quite personal history and offered products through mutually beneficial partnership. The stories that owners hopefully share to be used to emphasize the unique brand traits, interesting journeys and even breakthroughs worth noticing. The physical resources are locations, shops and their tangible products; the cloths, accessories, hats, bags and shoes anchoring the concept to use value, and make it possible to deliver the value proposal to customer and one may photograph a visible prove of successful treasure hunt, which them boosts the visibility of the whole concept. And without everything received from the shops, the inspiration wouldn't have anything to wrap around and the brand wouldn't even exist.

#### **5.4.3 Other Beneficial Partnerships**

Proceeding where a company instead of uselessly trying to perform certain activities by most likely increasing uncertainty and risks, extend its own capabilities by relying on its partners to act out the same successfully, is common and logical and describes well the vital partners presented related to the key resources they provide to VHS. Besides them there are other important actors with whom the VHS is aiming to bind long lasting and stimulating co-operational *network*.

As alluded earlier a group of *bloggers* suitable to the concepts themes, writing about lifestyle and fashion, would be personally invited to the launching implemented as demo-tour around the shops meeting the owners and getting an introduction to Vintage Hunt System, while taking pictures and having good time giving socializing with the team and partners. Later on possibilities of cross-advertisement and other options of contribution will be discussed with the bloggers privately. Similar prior to publishing the concept, contacting and suggest topic to writers of distribution magazines writing about leisure time and entertainment e.g. NYT-media ([www.nyt.fi](http://www.nyt.fi)) and publications directed to suitable age and lifestyle groups such as universities magazines e.g. Ylioppilaslehti ([www.ylioppilaslehti.fi](http://www.ylioppilaslehti.fi)).

Aspiration to form co-operation with supposedly the most outward actor in Helsinki traveling scene, *Visit Helsinki* ([www.visithelsinki.fi](http://www.visithelsinki.fi)), would bring substantial starting point when aiming at noticeable spot for the visiting foreign tourists. When achieved, the people and

publishing structures behind Visit Helsinki would guarantee volume, practical guidance even financial support, and if brought out successfully credibility for overall image.

## **5.5 Results**

Everything that has been achieved by the time of publishing this thesis and formulated to be seen shows at the appendices. All of the following items are under development, but not yet published. The outcomes condense to strategic components, visual and informal content of the VHS webpage and attempt to explain the desirable mood of the entire concept. This chapter's purpose is to clarify the current situation and how the actions explained in previous subchapters are to be transferred into visible commodities.

The strategic core focusing on partnerships and actions of Vintage Hunt System are presented in the Business Model Canvas (Appendix 4.). They are put in order by colours and using minimum amount of words to make the core elements clear to browse through. The BMC was collected by using the information presented earlier about the strategy formation and infers to the partner shops listed on Appendix 3. The shops distinguish from each other providing differently stressed collections of clothing from various decades and styles. The presented ones were picked out to mirror comprehensively the scene at the moment in Helsinki.

The layout of the front page (Appendix 6.) and logo sketches (Appendix 5.) help to explain how the concept would be presented to the public to reach the wanted customer segment and related resources. On the homepage would be an introductory video presenting the page and concept, icon for social media channels used, and top bar including links to the topics of Vintage Hunt: Map, Booklet, Community and Team. The bottom bar would then summarize the idea, team, contact information and most recent posts in writing. By opening the Map section, one will get tips how to use the map and to recognize the shops marked with the VHS stickers. Booklet section will contain the online storybook assembling all the fine pictures and stories of VHS partner shops and their owners. Community page will be the location where all material delivered by customers will appear, as well as event advertisement and possible competitions. Team section will provide a peek for the customers to know what's going on with the concept behind the scenes and to understand the motivational factors actuating to run Vintage Hunt System.

The moodboard (Appendix 7, Appendix 8.) was collected from various versions of compelling city maps and display also the ones made of Helsinki (Marimekko and HEL YEAH!). The bright colours, certain styling of text and shapes, use of cartoonish pictures and overall joyfulness were important to be portrayed and conveyed.

## 6 Discussion

The aim of thesis work was set quite early stage of the seminar, crystallizing to project oriented, customer experience focused and located to Helsinki region. And the development process started by defining and concretizing the assumption of a problem, personally noticed lack of suitable, easy to use service that would serve a specific group of second-hand enthusiasts. In a sense before the creative process and studying about the topic any deeply started, the end point or a wanted answer was defined and imagined. Personal excitement and desire to find solution and best practise to produce it to others guaranteed the continuation of the project, all the way from September 2014 when the first mind map of possible ideas was drawn to March 2015 when the concept was accomplished to shape to readable form that articulates clearly its interaction with theory ground work.

To describe the clear thoughts of the firstly designed, quite easily completed product and combined procedures which would according to the plan join hobbyist together, from authors mind and simple drawings into format such as service path was experienced troublesome as it also brought to attention plenty of strategist negligence and details to be modified and fine down. Besides the proposal poster day was first time the concept was demonstrated to anyone else and this way allowed for critic. Wanted and dreaded yet know to be conducive and priceless feedback enabled to show the plan later to others as well causing oneself to generate discussions about the attractiveness and need for such material or activities.

During the development process the biggest issues occurred when decision making was postponed in the fear of choosing wrongly whilst missing factors which might have assisted on realizing the strategy and demanded actions in faster pace, such as discussion partners or project team, more concrete context as well as fixed time table demanding attainment results more strictly. Realizing the missing resources demanded to proceed the project closer to content development or publishing, not to mention gathering the suitable talents to assist with areas crucial to master – almost stopped the information assembly and I felt forced to figure out the insufficiency of my own expertise when facing time management and finances. The original plan of thesis finalizing seemed too tight to reach when trying to solve everything by oneself, especially when caring to produce better than average results.

I resolved the pressure by regarding my own close network full of firsthand information about the settled scene both as customers and providers, fashion, graphic and content designing, project management and public relations. The problematic situation was settled

by asking advice from more experienced, who made the processing and rearrangements easier. Greatest stress factors were solved by allowing more time for the work and reducing the stress over budget: instead of planning to publish a tangible booklet straight away latest at coming spring 2015, it was suspended and focus was brought back to generating thorough whole, changed to be published through an alternative channel; internet, to reduce costs and demanded time to share and update the product. Evaluating the future challenges with the execution and financials before taking action further, it enables to re-design the whole business model, without unnecessary risks.

When presenting the actions done during the life cycle of VHS, several dissimilarities can occur to the forecast, because at the time of this thesis the planned project team does not yet exist and its aim is not to make profit but to provide new marketing asset for others businesses. Still the lifecycle follows a route of renewing services, enabling to maintain control over the project and possibility to try predicting how would be wise to continue. Before the thesis work started the theory of concept development and the complexity of managing such long lasting process was quite unfamiliar, though they had been explored practice wise in smaller scale at school related collaboration projects. Suitable theory to enable learning while doing or even success in projects many phases, was searched after and found beneficial. Nonetheless collecting an enough detailed and appropriate theory base about the fashion industry and the detected growth of demand for vintage and second-hand clothing was experienced difficult and worried to disturb the whole. Decision to rely on experience and nonacademic sources permitted to continue the information collection and planning. Not to involve interviewing the shop owners or other prospective partners to the process yet at the planning phase, made the unrecorded discussions relax and this way presumably more rewarding, still providing opinions taken into consideration while proceeding with the work.

Future development proposals came to mind evolve mainly around the execution plans and the bettering tactics to assist the successful launch and performance. In addition to the ones existing on the project description, enhancement and refinement of the strategy would be with valuable before taking other actions of execution than starting the preliminary talks with the considered partner shop owners. As many resources depend on the shops acquiescence, they should be given the chance to influence on the concept and suggest modifications if seen necessary for example concerning the service delivery or co-branding implementation. Keeping an eye on the internal and external changes which may effect on the competitive advantage or differentiating traits of VHS, is necessary when weighting the topicality and the most promising time to launch.

Another crucial future action to be taken is the settlement of the finances. To obtain a financial assessment and then formulate a pervasive budget, that would cover all recognizable and anticipated expenses, revenue streams and total cost structure, will set the last unsolved problems of this project. Budgeting e.g. the marketing and programming costs would enable the mostly significant discourse with the eligible sponsors, to be started the soonest after the facts are declared. After resolving the financial side and receiving supporters would be time to collect the professional team for designing and actualization of online channels. One option with a growing potential and merit of usability would be an application. Distribution could happen for all three platforms: Apple, Android and Windows, and the VHS community would be even easier to join when application would have the same elements than the webpage but modified to roll nicely on smartphone screen.

Personally the biggest learning experiences happened concerning the managing skills of project, timetabling, content planning and change management. Certainty on the project planning skills and managerial attitude was obtained during the thesis project, while noticing the concepts evolution during the process. The difficulties concerned and challenged mutually the thesis material, concept outcome and myself, but after realizing the variety of optional methods and the changeable, flexible character of business modelling, the uncertainty and stress over achieving the best or even momentarily wanted finalized version, receded from the way of a thought that the bettering can be continued if wanted so.

If anything, I have a great desire to continue the project to implementation. As valuing the passionate attitude of vintage and second-hand collectors, and being this involved and excited over the project I'm looking forward to bring more joy and excitement to the scene. After the VHS would get started, maps be taken to use, little eagerness would be kindled - I wish to use this already gathered network to create something more. I'd like to shape another actions side by side with the VHS. The other offerings could take place occasionally and be more interactive, such as events where customers could enjoy oneself in the company of others, while e.g. racing from shop to shop or other topic related locations and collecting marks to gain discounts. Organizing parties for the community in suitable environment is also on the upcoming to-do-lists as well as option of booking a style tour guide for a group of friends. All this of course demands time and depends on the successful start of Vintage Hunt System - concept.

As a speculation, citing to these thoughts and the project part of the thesis work, it seems that the developed concept would forward the original plan mentioned at the first proposal; foster the aspiration of providing something fun and independently executable to do for young locals and visitors while promoting hobby personally experienced important and

consumer behavior estimated to increase its popularity. Opening the topic for discussion with outsiders had considerable positive effect on how customer expectations and involvement was taken into account during the creation process. Thought the projects limitation and timetabling changed, instead of creating conflict for the thesis, it solved many practicalities and clarified the marketing as well as the whole marketing strategy and maintaining processes. This version of the thesis is momentarily ready, and will most likely be changed during execution referring to the biggest learning while this thesis: "Everything else shall end, except for change."

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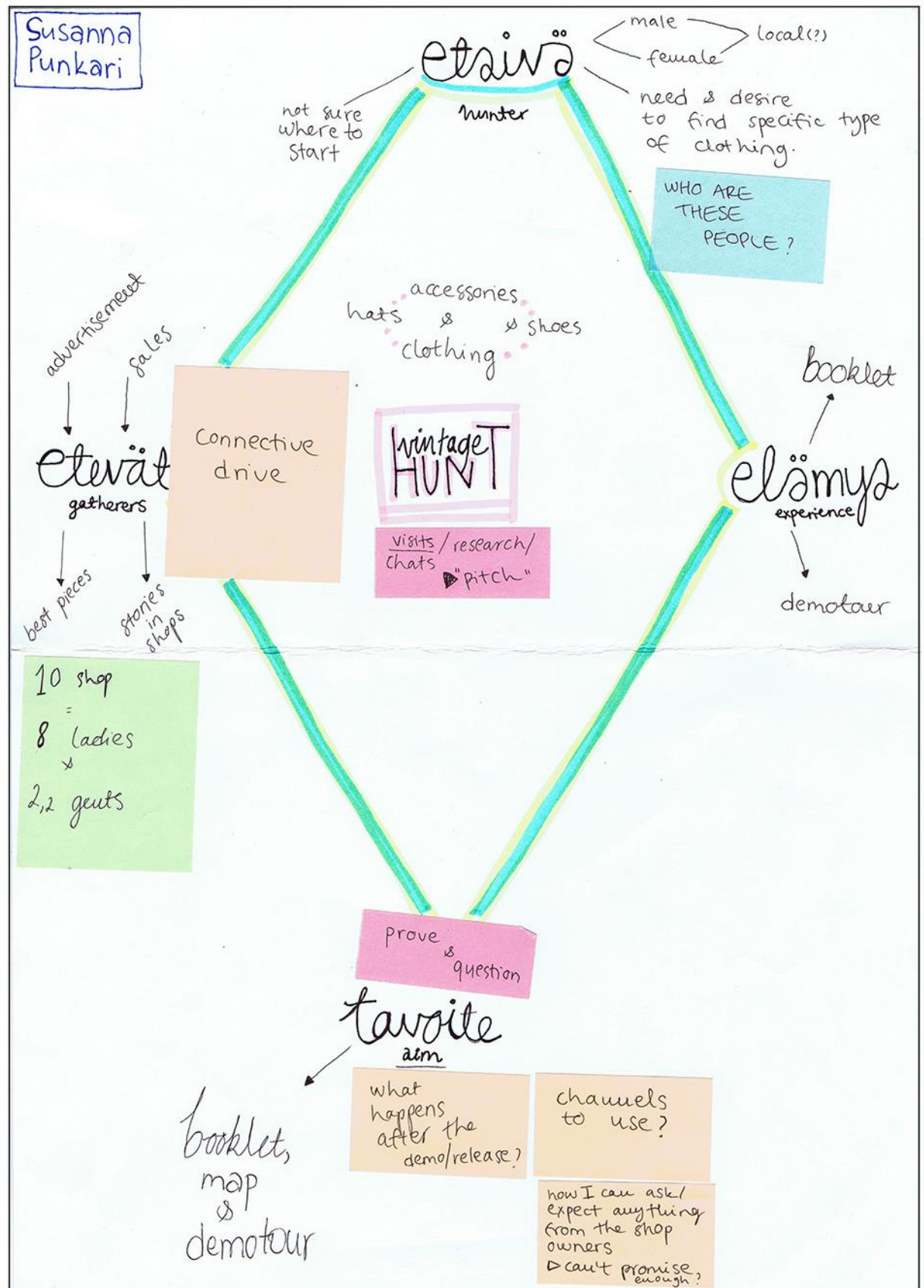
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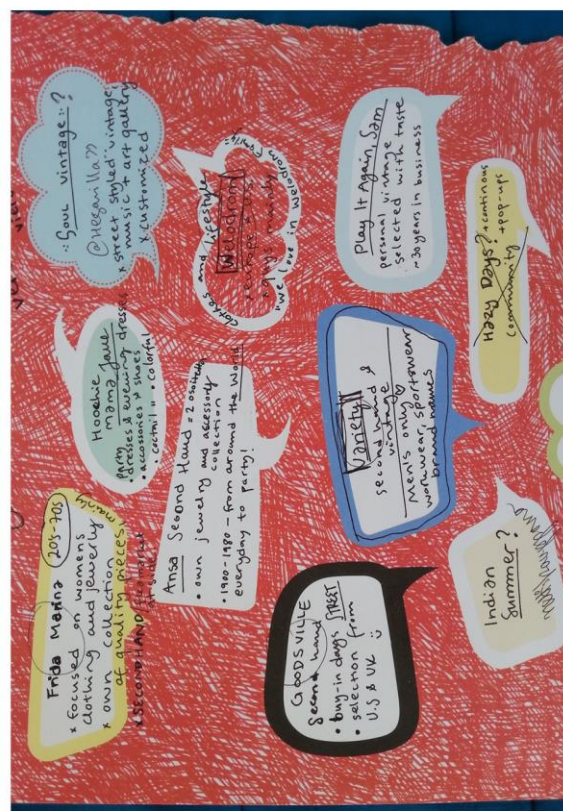
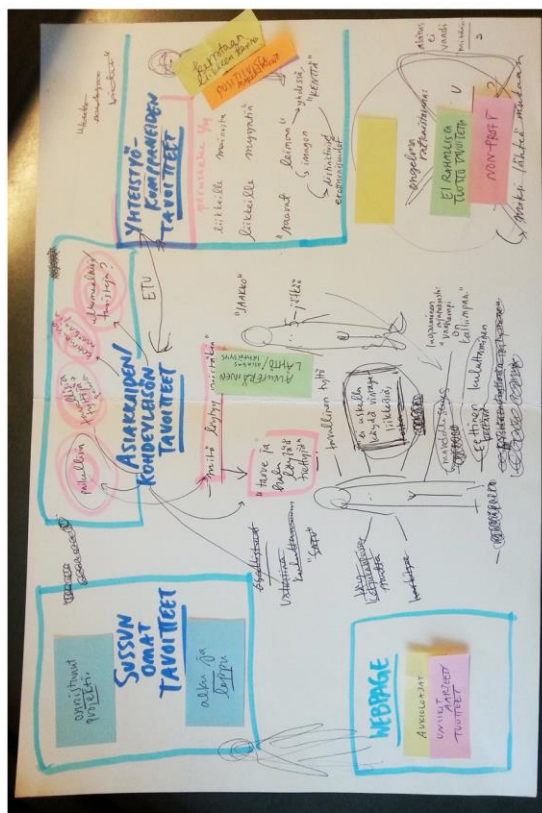
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## Appendices

### Appendix 1. Topic Proposal Poster: Vintage Hunt

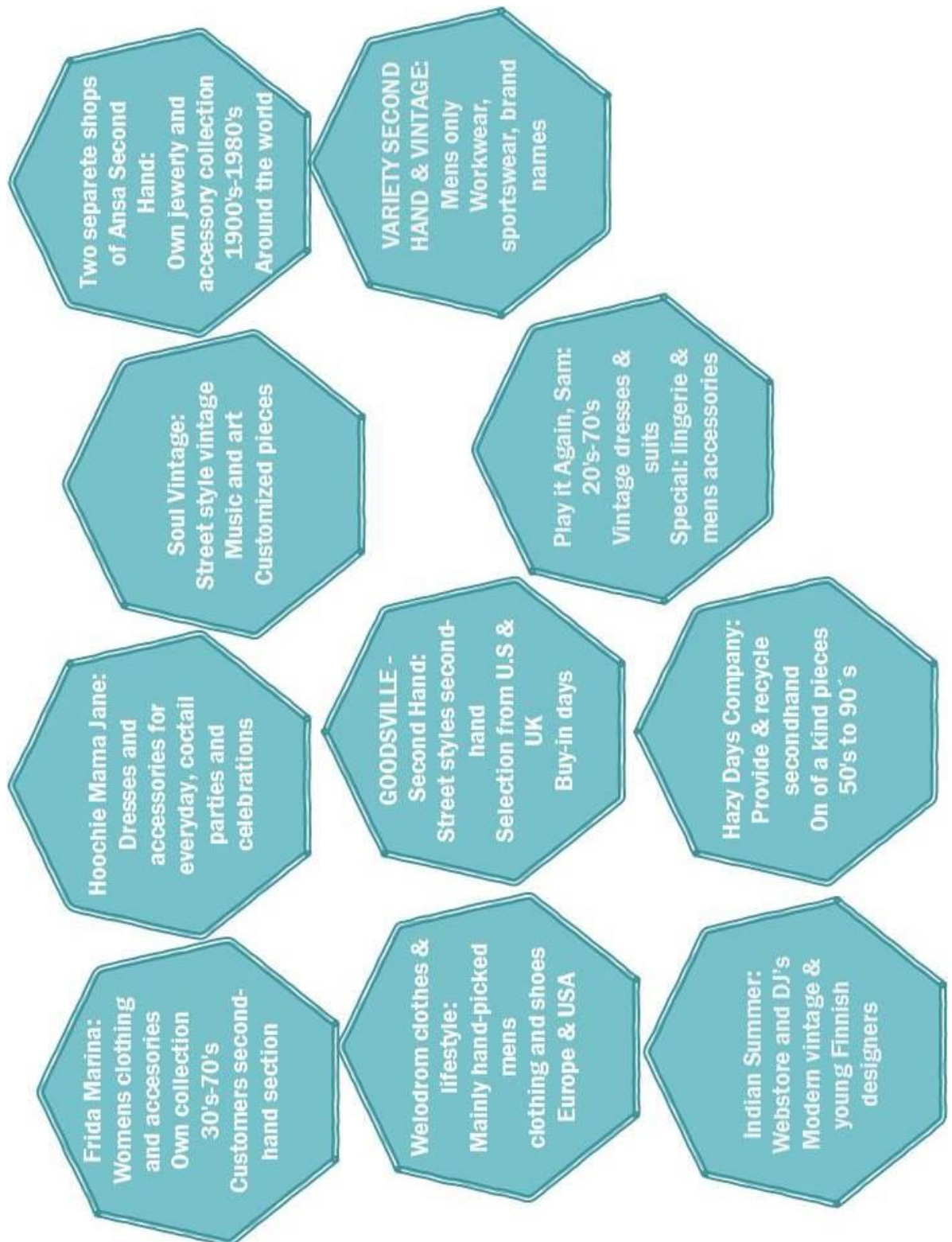


## Appendix 2. Creation Process Material

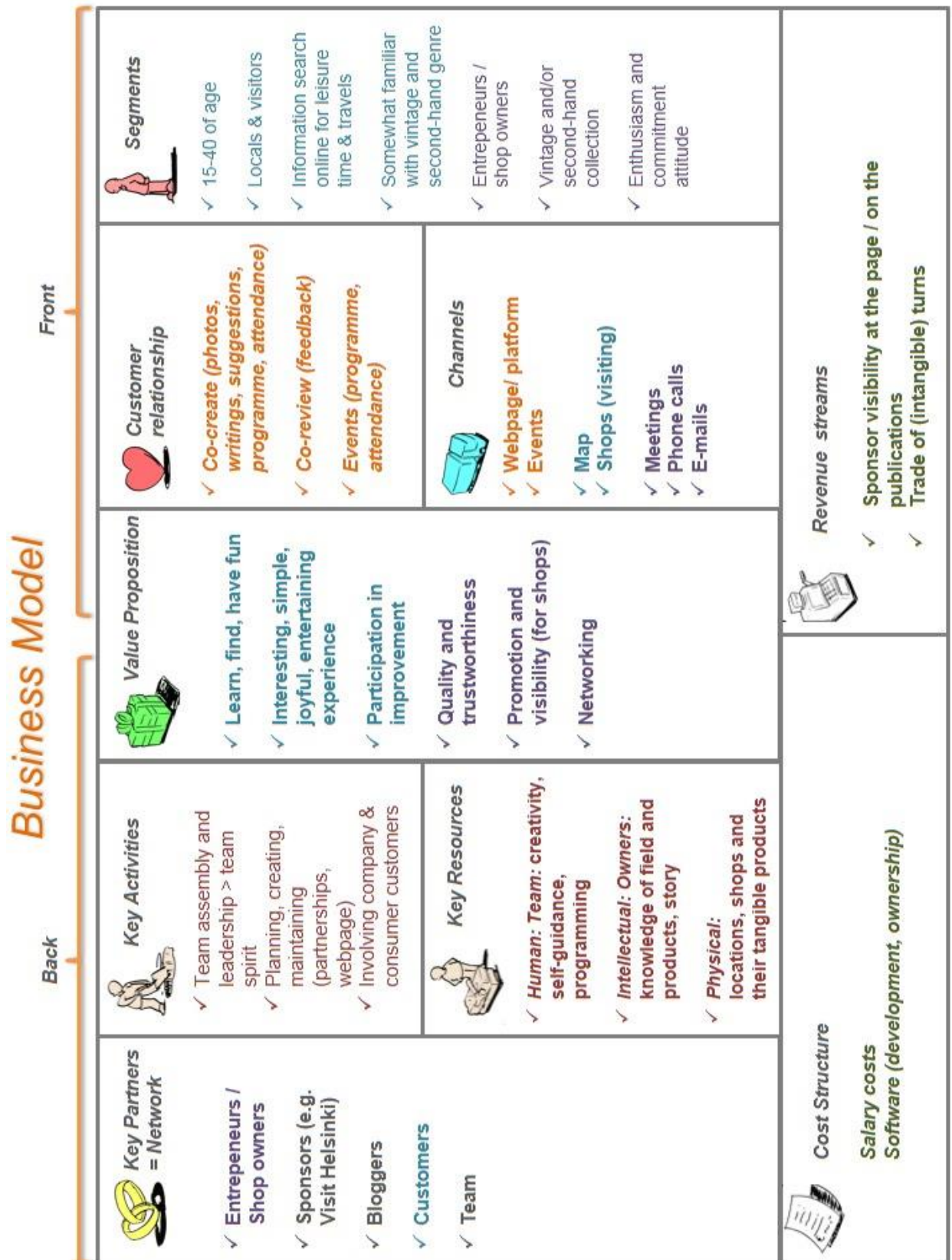




### Appendix 3. Selected 10 Shops and their differentiation



## Appendix 4. Business Model Canvas: Vintage Hunt System



## Appendix 5. Logo, Sticker

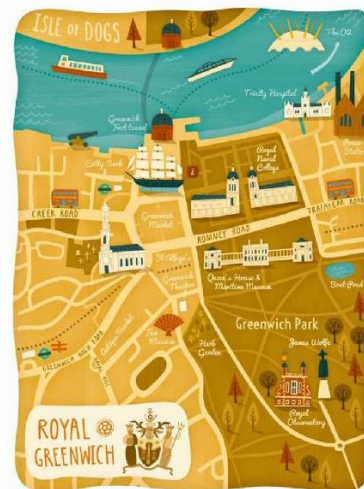
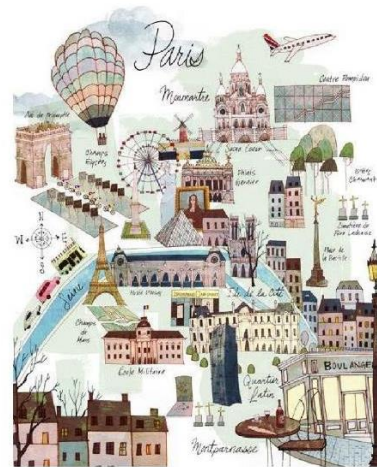
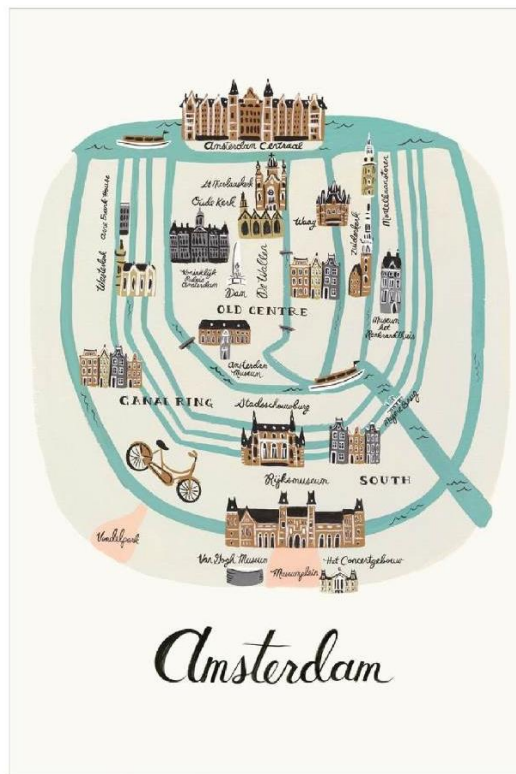






## Appendix 7. Mood board for the Treasure Map and Booklet

(Right side)





## Appendix 8. Mood board for the Treasure Map and Booklet

(Left side)



### References of the Mood board

Amsterdam

<http://www.mokkasin.com/sv/produkter/prints/amsterdam-rifle-paper.html>

Be Water My Friend

[https://d13yacurqjgara.cloudfront.net/users/105362/screenshots/1674507/dribbble37\\_1x.jpg](https://d13yacurqjgara.cloudfront.net/users/105362/screenshots/1674507/dribbble37_1x.jpg)

pg

Food Helsinki Map

<http://www.visithelsinki.fi/en/stay-and-enjoy/eat/food-helsinki-hel-yeah>

Greenwich

<https://www.behance.net/gallery/Greenwich-Map/10041815>

Madrid

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Polaroid: Sunflower

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Instant\\_film#/media/File:Polaroid\\_600\\_sunflower.jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Instant_film#/media/File:Polaroid_600_sunflower.jpg)

Tous debout pour nos p'tits loups

<http://lg2boutique.com/en/work/541/tous-debout-pour-nos-ptits-loups-edition>